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ABSTRACT

As part of an effort in Dade County, Florida, to develop bicultural alternatives for secondary education, an Hispanic counseling model was developed to promote adjustment in Hispanic American youths by enhancing their bicultural survival skills. The study reported in this paper researched the premise that, in a bicultural setting, biculturalism leads to adjustment while monoculturalism causes maladjustment. A Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire and a scale relating cultural involvement to behavioral adjustment in the classroom were developed and administered to Hispanic American (Cuban and non Cuban) high school students. Both scales were found to be reliable and valid for Cuban Americans, but less so for non Cuban Hispanic Americans. Bicultural subjects were found to be better adjusted than monocultural subjects. It is recommended on the basis of the study that school counselors confronted with immigrant youngsters living in a bicultural community be able to facilitate an effective bicultural adjustment. (Author/GC)

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BICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT AND ADJUSTMENT IN HISPANIC AMERICAN YOUTHS

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses two dimensions of bicultural involvement and reports on the development and validation of Biculturalism and a Cultural Involvement Scale for operationalizing both of these dimensions. Subjects for this study consisted of Hispanic American junior high school students living in the Greater Miami area. Both scales proved to be reliable and valid for Cuban-Americans. Theoretical and clinical implications of biculturalism to adjustment are discussed, and data to substantiate this relationship are presented. Bicultural youngsters were better adjusted than monocults.

BICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT AND ADJUSTMENT IN HISPANIC AMERICAN YOUTHS

Acculturation has been widely discussed as a unidimensional process (e.g., Berry & Annis, 1974; Carballo, 1970; Szapocznik, Scopetta, Kurtines, & Aranalde, in press). Theorists have usually conceptualized immigrants as adopting host culture behavior and values while simultaneously discarding those attributes of their culture of origin. Thus, acculturation has been viewed as a process in which there is an inverse linear relationship between an individual's involvement with his/her original and host cultures.

This traditional view of acculturation as a unidimensional process was due in part to melting pot pressures that caused individuals to behave in this fashion (Marina, in press). However, with the growing acceptance of the concept of cultural pluralism, acculturation has increasingly become a more multidimensional process with adaptation to a host culture no longer requiring rejection of the culture of origin.

In those instances in which immigrants reside in bicultural communities they characteristically need to participate in both communities (Lasaga, Szapocznik, & Kurtines, Note 1). This is particularly true with second generation youths who experience directly the contrast between familial and educational institutions, where the former transmits the culture of origin norms and the latter introduces host cultural norms. For those individuals who live in two cultural worlds, effective adjustment requires an acceptance of both worlds as well as skills to live among and interact with both cultural groups. To learn about the host culture is clearly adaptive, but to simultaneously discard those skills which effectively allow them to interact with the culture of origin, such as language and relationship style, is not adaptive. Thus, in bicultural settings, when adaptation to a host culture occurs in the way that acculturation

ation has been traditionally conceptualized--i.e., adopting host culture and rejecting culture of origin,--then it inherently leads to psychosocial maladjustment. In fact, many studies have documented high rates of behavioral disorders among migrants, experiencing pressures to acculturate unidimensionally (cf. Szapocznik, et al., in press).

In order to minimize the detrimental effects of adaptation to a new culture, individuals living in bicultural communities must become bicultural themselves. The process of becoming bicultural involves learning communication and negotiation skills in two different cultural contexts, each with a separate set of rules. Bicultural youths, in particular, must be aware of these differences and need to develop the flexibility to implement different survival skills according to the cultural context in which they function.

A programmatic effort was conducted in Dade County Florida to develop bicultural alternatives to secondary education. As part of this effort an Hispanic counseling model was developed to promote adjustment in Hispanic youths by enhancing their bicultural survival skills. The basic premise behind this orientation was that in a bicultural setting such as Greater Miami Dade County, biculturalism leads to adjustment whereas monoculturalism causes maladjustment. The present study researched this basic premise. In order to conduct this study, it was necessary to develop a measure of biculturalism. This paper reports both on the development of a Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire and a study relating Biculturalism and Cultural Involvement to behavioral adjustment in the classroom.

Method

Item Construction

The items constructed for the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire

were obtained by modifying or adopting some of the items from an Acculturation Scale developed by Szapocznik, et al., (in press). This Acculturation Scale is a factorially derived scale that measures individual acculturation as a linear function of the amount of time a person has been exposed to the host culture. The Acculturation Scale includes self report behavior items prepared in a five-point Likert format, adopted from the set of items reported by Campisi (1947) and Carballo (1970). The original items in the Acculturation Scale were designed to assess the degree to which a person feels comfortable in one or the other culture in such a way that this scale measures involvement in one culture to the exclusion of the other.

In contrast to the Acculturation Scale, most of the items constructed for the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire were designed to assess the degree to which a person feels comfortable in each culture independent of the other. This was attained by modifying some of the acculturation items by separating the Anglo American and Hispanic American components of the items. For example, Item 1 in the Acculturation Scale asks the person which language he/she prefers to speak. The response choices for this item are:

1	2	3	4	5
Spanish all of the time	Spanish most of the time	Spanish and English equally	English most of the time	English all of the time

For the Biculturalism Questionnaire, on the other hand, two separate components of this item were developed:

a) How comfortable do you feel speaking Spanish?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all comfortable				Very comfortable

b) How comfortable do you feel speaking English?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all comfortable				Very comfortable

In the first case, the preference for language usage is measured in such a way that preference for one language is assumed to be negatively correlated with preference for the other language. However, the method of item construction for most of the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire—the second set of items presented above—does not make any assumptions about the relationship between preference and usage between both languages.

Table 1 contains the 33 items selected for the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire.

Please insert Table 1 about here

Scoring

The Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire measures two conceptually independent bipolar dimensions: (1) a dimension of biculturalism which ranges from monoculturalism to biculturalism, and (2) a dimension of cultural involvement which ranges from cultural marginality to cultural involvement. The rationale for developing two independent dimensions is presented in the discussion section below. Scores for each of these dimensions are computed on the basis of two subscales, one measuring Americanism and the other, Hispanicism. Americanism scores were obtained by summing all of the items reflecting an involvement in American culture (Items number 6-10, 18-24, and 25-33). Similarly, Hispanicism scores were obtained by summing all of the items reflecting an involvement in Hispanic culture. This is accomplished by summing the weights of items 1-5 and 11-17, and the reverse of the weights for items 25-33. Thus, for example, if a person scores a "2" in item 25, he or she would receive for that item a weight of "2" for the Americanism Scale and a "4" for the Hispanicism Scale.

Scores on the Biculturalism Scale[1] were obtained by calculating the following difference score:

Biculturalism score = Hispanicism score - Americanism score, with scores close to zero (0) indicating biculturalism; scores deviating from zero indicating monoculturalism. A positive difference score reveals monoculturalism in the Hispanic direction, whereas a negative difference score reveals monoculturalism in an American direction.

Scores on the Cultural Involvement Scale[1] were obtained by calculating the following sum score:

Cultural Involvement score = Hispanicism score + Americanism score, with a high score indicating greater degree of cultural involvement, and a low score indicating cultural marginality, that is a lack of involvement in either culture.

Subjects

Four samples (total N=192) were used in the development and validation of the Biculturalism Scale. They were drawn from three junior high schools in the Dade County (Greater Miami) area. Sample 1 consists of 93 Cuban Americans and included 51 males and 42 females. The age of this sample ranged from 12 to 16 with a mean of 13.7 (SD=0.9). Sample 2 consisted of 47 nonCuban Hispanic Americans and included 25 males and 22 females. The age of this sample ranged from 12 to 16 with a mean of 14.1 (SD=1.0). Sample 3 consisted of 52 Cuban American junior high school students, including 25 females and 27 males. The age of this sample ranged from 12 to 16 with a mean of 13.9 (SD=1.0). Sample 4 consisted of 16 subjects, 11 Cuban Americans and 5 nonCuban Hispanic Americans, including 10 males and 6 females. The average age of this sample ranged from 12 to 16 with a mean of 14.06 (SD=1.1).

Reliability

The Alpha internal consistency coefficients for Sample 1 and 2 combined, yielded .93 and .89 for the Hispanicism and Americanism Scales, respectively. The internal consistency reliabilities for the Biculturalism and Cultural Involvement Scales were obtained using the formulas for calculating reliabilities of difference and composite scores suggested by Guilford (1954, p. 393-394). The reliability of the difference scores (Biculturalism Scale) was .94, and of the composite scores (Cultural Involvement Scale) was .79.

Test-retest reliability were obtained for the subjects in Sample 4 over a six-weeks interval. These reliabilities were .50, $p<.05$; .54, $p<.01$; .79, $p<.001$; .14, ns., respectively for the Cubanism, Americanism, Biculturalism and Cultural Involvement Scales.

Validational Evidence

Criterion related validational evidence for the Biculturalism Scale was obtained using biculturalism ratings as an external criterion. Criterion related validity concerns the relationship between a measure and some external non-test variable. Students (N=53 from Sample 1; N=31 for Sample 2) who had bicultural classroom teachers were rated for level of biculturation by their teachers on a standardized form. Note that only those students with "bicultural" teachers were rated since it would not have been possible for non-bicultural teachers to assess the degree of biculturality of their students. This sample of bicultural teachers was comprised entirely of Cuban Americans.

Teachers were asked to rate their students on a Likert scale from "1" to "5" in which "1" indicated a very bicultural student: one who is fairly fluent in both languages and fairly comfortable in both cultural contexts; "5" indicated a student who was not bicultural: one who has a definite preference for one language and culture.

For the purposes of analyses the Biculturalism Scale scores were transformed[2]. The correlation between the transformed Biculturalism Scale scores and teacher ratings for biculturalism of the Cuban American youths (Sample 1) was highly significant, $r=.42$, $p<.001$, $n=53$. Moreover, Cultural Involvement Scale scores were also correlated with teacher ratings for biculturalism and this relationship was significant, $r=22$, $p<.05$, $n=53$. Thus, both dimensions of the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire, biculturalism and cultural involvement, are related to teachers impressions of their students level of biculturation.

These correlations were also computed for the nonCuban Hispanics (Sample 2). The relationship between teacher rating, and Biculturalism and Cultural Involvement Scales scores did not reach significance, r= -.12, n=?1; 4=.12, n=.31 respectively.

Adjustment and Biculturalism

Counseling programs for Hispanic students were established under the assumption that bicultural involvement leads to adjustment. In an effort to test this assumption, the relationship of transformed Biculturalism and Cultural Involvement Scale scores to adjustment was investigated using two different methods.

This study examines the relationship between Biculturalism and Cultural Involvement to teachers' ratings of adjustment. Bicultural teachers were asked to rate their students in Samples 1 and 2 for level of adjustment on a standardized form. Teachers were asked to rate their students on a Likert Scale from "1" to "5" in which "1" indicated a very well adjusted student: A student who gets good grades, shows respect for authority, comes to school regularly, participates in school activities and obeys school rules and regulations; whereas "5" indicates a student who is not able to

function well in a school environment, does not get good grades, does not show respect for authority, does not come to school regularly, does not participate in school activities, and does not obey school rules and regulations. The ratings were recorded on a 5-point Likert format ranging from 1 = outstanding to 5 = problem students.

Students were classified into two levels of biculturation (low and high) on the basis of a median split on the transformed Biculturalism Scale scores; and into two levels of Cultural Involvement (low and high) on the basis of a median split on Cultural Involvement Scale scores. ANOVAS were conducted on teacher adjustment by the two levels of Biculturalism and Cultural Involvement. For the Cuban American students in Sample 1, there was only a significant main effect due to level of biculturation ($F(1,87) = 4.6$, $p < .03$) with the more bicultural students obtaining higher teacher ratings of adjustment. However, for the nonCuban Hispanics in Sample 2, there were no significant effects. Thus, Biculturalism scores appear to predict level of adjustment in Cuban American students when rated by their Cuban American teachers.

The relationship between these variables was further investigated for youths at the extremes of the adjustment continuum. For this purpose, bicultural teachers were asked to select: (1) their best adjusted students, and (2) their least adjusted students. All the Cuban American students selected as best adjusted were pooled (N=10) and compared to the Cuban American students selected as least adjusted (N=7). The two groups were compared using t-tests on both dimensions of bicultural involvement. The differences between the means on transformed Biculturalism Scale scores were highly significant, $t=3.03$, $df=15$, $p < .005$. Similarly, the differences between the means on Cultural Involvement scores were highly significant $t=3.11$, $df=15$, $p < .005$. The number of nonCuban Hispanics in the extreme categories of adjustment was too small to permit parallel analyses on this group.

The results of this study reveal that whereas biculturalism is generally related to adjustment, both biculturalism and cultural involvement appear to be particularly important determinants of extreme levels of adjustment.

Discussion

Biculturalism implies that the individual can participate in two cultural contexts. Cuban Immigrants living in bicultural communities such as Greater Miami/Dade County must be able to effectively interact with both of these contexts in order to minimize the detrimental effects of acculturation such as psychosocial or behavioral disorders.

This article: (1) discusses two conceptually independent dimensions of biculturation which have theoretical and clinical implications, and (2) presents a short questionnaire for reliably operationalizing both dimensions. The dimension of Monoculturalism-Biculturalism, as its name indicates, assesses degree to which a person is involved in only one culture (either Hispanic American or Anglo American) or in both cultures simultaneously. However, the method for computing scores on this dimension might result in identical scores for an individual who is "equally non-involved with either culture" (i.e., a person who is bicultural by default) and an individual who is "equally and fully involved in both cultures" (i.e., the true bicultural person). Note that scores for biculturalism were obtained by substracting Americanism scores from Hispanicism scores. In order to distinguish the true bicultural individual from the "mock bicultural" individual, it was necessary to develop a second dimension which was labeled "Cultural Marginality-Cultural Involvement." Figure 1 depicts the possible relationship between both dimensions and their implications for adjustment.

The results of this study suggest that the notions of biculturalism proposed here describe the phenomena of biculturation among Cuban Americans better than nonCuban Hispanics. In particular, scores from the Biculturalism Questionnaire failed to predict teacher ratings for biculturalism among nonCuban Hispanics. This lack of validity for the nonCuban Hispanics appears to be due in part to the way in which the measure of biculturalism interacts with the community in which biculturalism is measured. In Dade County, the activities available for involvement with a culture are typically either Cuban or American so that in practice nonCuban Hispanics lack a distinct nonCuban Hispanic community with which to identify. Thus, the validity of the Biculturalism Questionnaire appears to depend on its use with subjects who live in a context which appropriately reflect the subjects' biculturalism.

Generally, acculturation related problems arise when immigrant youngsters living in a bicultural context, acculturate too little or too much, i.e., remain or become monocultural (See Figure 1). For example, some youngsters become overacculturated and totally reject their Hispanic roots—including their parents, Hispanic language, etc,—whereas others remain underacculturated and refuse to adjust and integrate with their American context (Prieto, 1978). Neither position represents a good adjustment to the reality of these youngsters' life context. <u>These Hispanic youths live both in Hispanic and American worlds</u>. Therefore, <u>effective adjustment requires an acceptance of both worlds as well as skills to live amongst and interact with both, Hispanic and American cultural groups</u>.

Clinical experience (e.g. Prieto, 1978) and research (Szapocznik, Scopetta, & King, 1978) show that second generation youngsters, especially those of junior and senior high school age, may tend to overacculturate and

give up their roots as they become Americanized. In the process of giving up their roots, they reject their parents and their culture of origin giving rise to serious family and intrapersonal identity conflicts (e.g. Szapocznik,et al., 1978). In these cases, the parents may perceive the problem as the high level of acculturation of the youngster, responding with attempts to stiffle adjustive Americanization on the part of the youngster. These intergenerational acculturation conflicts tend to escalate quickly. One common result of these conflicts is that the youngster rebels against all authority figures, generalizing to the school setting where they become highly disruptive discipline problems. Note that in Figure 1 the most maladjusted youngsters are depicted in Quadrant III which represents highly Americanized monoculturals.

At the other end of the spectrum a few youngsters underacculturate, retaining their Hispanicity and failing to learn adaptive Americanized behaviors (Quadrant IV). These youngsters remain close to their families, and they tend to belong to families who have been traumatized by the immigration process. These families become encapsulated in order to isolate themselves from the effects of the "foreign environment". They tend to develop few skills in effective interaction and negotiation with the American culture. In these families, children tend to get along well with their parents, but they also become withdrawn, isolated, and apathetic so that they present a depressed, neurotic pattern of behaviors. Under extreme circumstances, these "internalizers" may become suicidal (cf. Prieto, 1978). Except under these extreme situations, these underacculturated youths are never identified by the school system since they are not very disruptive.

These detrimental effects of adaptation to new culture for those individuals living in bicultural communities occur when they under or over acculturate, and could be ameliorated by encouraging biculturalism. In fact,

youngsters can maintain or develop an involvement in either culture without giving up the other as empirically demonstrated by Lasaga et al., (Note 1). In an effort to move toward biculturalism, group sesssions in ethnic value clarification are helpful. In these sessions students may learn about ethnic value differences and then proceed to explore those aspects of Hispanic and Anglo values that are positive and those that are negative to them. Throughout this process it may also be desirable to explore those aspects of each culture that arouse feelings of pride and attraction or embarrassment and rejection.

There are yet other strategies that may be helpful in improving the adjustment of these students to their bicultural existence. Bicultural students need to learn communication and negotiation skills in two different cultural contexts, each with a separate set of rules. Bicultural students must be aware of these differences and need to develop the flexibility to implement different survival skills according to the cultural context in which they function. Thus, it is recommended that the counselor confronted with immigrant youngsters living in a bicultural community, provide the necessary guidance to facilitate an effective bicultural adjustment.

FIGURE 1

Hypothesized Relationship between Cultural Involvement, Biculturalism, and Adjustment

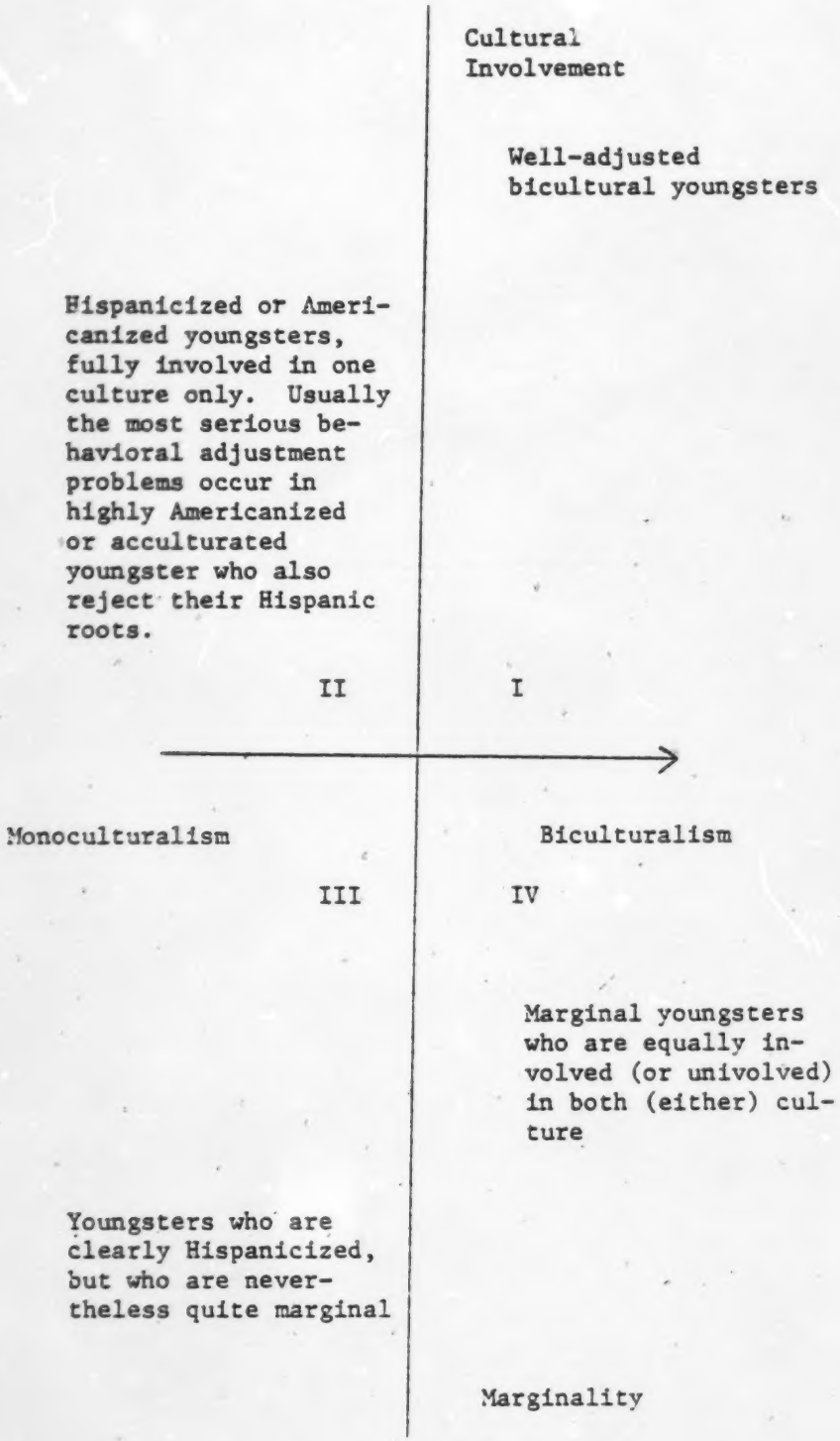
Cultural Involvement
Well-adjusted bicultural youngsters
Hispanicized or Americanized youngsters, fully involved in one culture only. Usually the most serious behavioral adjustment problems occur in highly Americanized or acculturated youngster who also reject their Hispanic roots.
II
I
Monoculturalism
Biculturalism
III
IV
Marginal youngsters who are equally involved (or univolved) in both (either) culture
Youngsters who are clearly Hispanicized, but who are nevertheless quite marginal
Marginality

Table 1

Instructions: In the following questions please write the number that best describes your feelings.

A. How comfortable do you feel speaking SPANISH

	Not at all comfortable				Very comfortable
1. at HOME	1	2	3	4	5
2. in SCHOOL	1	2	3	4	5
3. at WORK	1	2	3	4	5
4. with FRIENDS	1	2	3	4	5
5. in GENERAL	1	2	3	4	5

B. How comfortable do you feel speaking ENGLISH

6. at HOME	1	2	3	4	5
7. in SCHOOL	1	2	3	4	5
8. at WORK	1	2	3	4	5
9. with FRIENDS					
10. in GENERAL	1	2	3	4	5

C. How much do you enjoy

	Not at all				Very much
11. Hispanic music	1	2	3	4	5
12. Hispanic dances	1	2	3	4	5
13. Hispanic-oriented places	1	2	3	4	5
14. Hispanic type recreation	1	2	3	4	5
15. Hispanic T.V. programs	1	2	3	4	5
16. Hispanic radio station	1	2	3	4	5
17. Hispanic books and magazines	1	2	3	4	5

D. How much do you enjoy

	Not at all				Very much
18. American music	1	2	3	4	5
19. American dances	1	2	3	4	5
20. American-oriented places	1	2	3	4	5
21. American-type recreation	1	2	3	4	5
22. American T.V. programs	1	2	3	4	5
23. American radio stations	1	2	3	4	5
24. American books and magazines	1	2	3	4	5

E. Instructions: Sometimes life is not as we really want it. If you could have your way, how would you like the following aspects of your life to be like? Please marks an X in the column that applies to you.

	1	2	3	4	5
	I would with this to be completely Hispanic	I would wish this to be mostly Hispanic	I would wish this to be both Hispanic & American	I would wish this to be mostly American	I would wish this to be completely American
25. Food:					
26. Language:					
27. Music:					
28. T.V. Programs:					
29. Books/Magazines:					
30. Dances:					
31. Radio Programs:					
32. Way of Celebrating Birthdays:					
33. Way of Celebrating Weddings:					

REFERENCE NOTE

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FOOTNOTES

1. A computer program to score these scale, for use with the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is available from the senior autor
2. Transformed Biculturalism Score = 84 - Absolute Value (Biculturalism Scale score). Using this formula all scores become positive with a score of zero (0) indicating monoculturalism in either direction and a score of 84 indicating true biculturalism.